

Description of the 2002 Pennsylvania Orchard & Vineyard Survey

Introduction: Pennsylvania's fruit growers have traditionally enjoyed a prominent role in Pennsylvania agriculture while enhancing the Commonwealth's status as a leading producer of quality foods. In 2001, Pennsylvania ranked fifth in apple and pear production, fourth in peach and grape production, sixth in tart cherry production and ninth in sweet cherry production.

Primarily responsible is the relatively small intensified fruit producing area in relation to the size of Pennsylvania. There are 67 counties in the Commonwealth. Seven of these counties account for 86 percent of the total apple crop. Erie county produces virtually all of the grape tonnage and seven counties comprise 82 percent of the peach production. There are 7,700,000 acres in land in farms in the Keystone state with approximately 43,500 acres devoted to orchards and vineyards. Fruit acreage accounts for only two-tenths of a percent of the total acreage in Pennsylvania.

Survey Objective: The purpose of this survey is to satisfy requests by various segments of the fruit industry and others for an up-to-date detailed inventory of Pennsylvania's fruit tree numbers and acreage by age and variety. Growers, wholesalers, cooperatives, brokers, processors, retailers, input suppliers, research workers, county agents and government need and use the survey data for many important purposes. Growers provide the survey information, and the benefits derived through analysis of the data are channeled back to the growers through improved services.

In an effort to keep up with ever-changing information and industry needs, a completely new section was added to the grape survey. It allows for more of a breakdown on grape acreage, tonnage harvested and used, as well as utilization and price across the state.

This is the eleventh in a series of *Orchard & Vineyard Inventory Surveys* for Pennsylvania. The first was done in 1953 and subsequent surveys were conducted in 1957, 1964, 1967, 1972, 1978, 1982, 1987, 1992, 1997, and 2002. This report will also be comparable with surveys compiled by other State Statistical Offices.

Data from this report and the U.S. Census of Agriculture will be used to review annual estimates of fruit production published by the Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistics Service.

Definition of a Commercial Fruit Operation: A commercial fruit operation is defined as one having 100 or more trees maintained for production for at least one of the following fruits: apples, peaches, pears, plums and prunes, sweet cherries, tart cherries, and nectarines or two acres or more of grapevines maintained for production. A grower qualifying as commercial for any fruit was considered to be commercial for all fruits, and the counts of other fruits were included regardless of the number.

Fruit operations which did not meet these requirements were excluded from this survey. Also excluded from this survey were mature orchards and vineyards which qualified based on tree numbers or acreage, but were not being maintained for production at the time of data collection. Since noncommercial growers are excluded from this survey, all tables are titled as commercial. In this publication, *2002 Pennsylvania Orchard and Vineyard Statistics*, the tables which include only growers with 100 or more trees of the fruit listed, or two or more acres of grapes, will be footnoted as such.

Survey Procedures: The list construction for this survey began with the Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistics Service's fruit list. In early 2002, the Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistics Service began to solicit lists of potential fruit growers from various outside sources. These lists were merged and duplication removed, yielding 1,383 names for the distribution of questionnaires. The list of names was divided into large operations and non-large operations.

The data collection phase of the survey started with a mail portion in May, to approximately 553 operations known to have fruit acreage of some type and amount. Between July and August 2002, about 800 fruit growers who were considered to be large operators were personally interviewed by one of our field enumerators. Throughout the summer and fall of 2002, all nonrespondents to the mail portion of the survey were attempted to be personally contacted by our field enumerators. Field enumerators also interviewed all observed orchards that did not appear in the final list of orchards.

Other and Total Other Varieties: This category includes minor varieties of the specified fruit. Included are fruit tree numbers from growers who reported a small quantity of "miscellaneous" or "other" (or unclassified) varieties. A small percentage of data for some of the major varieties may be included in the "other" category.